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ABSTRACT

This executive summary introduces Volume II of the "African American Education Data Book," which brings together information about the educational status of African American preschool, elementary, and secondary school children. Like Volume I, Volume II records the African American educational progress that has previously existed as part of research and Census databases, at testing companies, and at universities and schools. The data book retrieves and analyzes a vast amount of data about the educational representation, distribution, and achievement of African Americans. The data, which are largely descriptive, can be the basis for setting new research agenda and for improving educational opportunities. The Executive Summary allows some conclusions about African American preschool, elementary, and secondary education. The negative consequences of poverty are evident in many ways. Poverty appears to limit the involvement of African American parents in their children's education and reduce the number of African American children who are able to gain access to private school education. In addition, African American students remain unevenly distributed throughout the nation's schools. More than one-half of African American public school students are in the southern United States, and about one-third attend schools in large central cities. Gaps in achievement that show up in the preschool years continue through the high school years. Data show that African American students are over-represented in special education, and that they may leave school at higher rates than their White counterparts. African Americans are also under-represented among public school teachers and principals, and there is some evidence that they are less well prepared and receive less support for inservice and professional development activities. (Contains 22 figures.) (SLD)

FREDERICK D. PATTERSON RESEARCH INSTITUTE OF THE COLLEGE FUND/UNCF
A RESEARCH INSTITUTE ON AFRICAN AMERICANS AND EDUCATION

THE

AFRICAN AMERICAN EDUCATION

DATA BOOK

Volume II: Preschool through High School Education

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DATA BOOK

Volume II: Preschool through High School Education

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Testimonials

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A sixth of the students in American public schools are African American but discussions of educational policy in recent years most often either ignore them or address their problems in terms of stereotypes and fads. This book continues the Patterson Institute's historic effort to assemble vast collections of clearly presented facts to inform the discussion and to provide a basis for much more thoughtful discussion and planning for educational change. Data that would otherwise be available only to those who obtain and analyzed huge federal data sets on their computers is readily accessible here.

The book provides a treasure chest of important data. It is not designed to make ideological points; it reports the bad news as well as the good and it will be relied on by people looking at a wide variety of issues from many perspectives. The book pays attention not only to the schools and the educational results but to the context within which the schools must function—a context of disproportionate poverty, less prepared teachers, and segregated schools. Its tables also reflect the great size and diversity of the African American community and its major presence in private as well as public schools. Although I have a large collection of studies of education and my office is in the midst of a library, this is one book that I will consult regularly. This is an essential reference book and the Patterson Institute is laying a strong foundation for its mission of providing the information needed to improve education for African Americans.

Jacqueline Jordan Irvine
Emory University

Prevailing policies and practices directed at improving the school success of African American students have often been guided by good intentions, conventional wisdom, and limited and sparse data sources that focus on single explanations of school achievement. Until the publication of this important volume, there existed no single resource that comprehensively compiled and described data on the many complex variables related to the school performance and experiences of African American students. The African American Education Data Book is a major contribution for educational researchers and policy makers in pre-school through high school education. I predict that this extraordinary book will be extensively quoted and referenced in the educational literature. More importantly, I predict that this seminal work will be a significant catalyst for reforms in K-12 education that will result in increased school achievement for African American children who continue to suffer from unequal resources and limited opportunities.

Linda Darling-Hammond
Columbia University

These data are invaluable. If we are ever to tackle the root causes of inequality in this country, we must understand the conditions of education for African American students. Anecdotes and hunches are not enough. We need to know with clarity and certainty what opportunities to learn students have available. This is a critical first step to creating sensible, grounded policies that have a chance of making a difference.

Foreword

We are proud to present Volume II of the educational status of African American preschool, elementary, and secondary school children. Like Volume I, Volume II records the African American educational progress that, heretofore, has existed in a multitude of places: as a part of research and census databases; inside testing companies; and inside schools, colleges, and universities. When the data and information about the education of African Americans are dispersed in this way, the picture of the educational status and condition of African Americans is incomplete and inaccessible for analyses, research, and policymaking. This volume retrieves and analyzes a vast array of data about the educational representation, distribution, and achievement of African Americans. It relies upon the most reliable national cross-sectional and longitudinal data sources; sorts the data on students, schools, and school personnel according to educational level; and presents comparisons based upon sex, race and ethnicity, socioeconomic status, and type of preschools and schools.

At this early stage in the history of the Frederick D. Patterson Research Institute, the data are largely descriptive, focusing exclusively upon presenting "just the facts." The explanations for the facts are reserved for future research. Here, Michael T. Nettles and the researchers at the Patterson Institute attempt to synthesize the educational experiences of African American preschoolers, elementary, and secondary school students in a way that will inform and serve as a powerful way of thinking about both the progress made and the challenges that we must confront. We hope this compilation of data will reveal information that has existed in isolation to allow for setting new research agenda, and to pave the way for improving educational opportunities and outcomes in the future.

How satisfying it would be, we think, if this can produce the compelling facts that would instantly suggest direction and development for lay leaders, as well as for those in the business and education fields who are attempting to improve the nation's preschools, elementary, and secondary schools. We invite policymakers, educators, legislators, media, and the public to examine the data and to set priorities and activities to address the many important and challenging issues that are revealed.

As a new Institute of The College Fund/UNCF, the mission of the Frederick D. Patterson Research Institute is to design, conduct, and disseminate research to policymakers, educators, and the public with the goal of improving educational opportunities and outcomes for African Americans. The research conducted by the Institute focuses upon the educational status and attainment of African Americans from preschool through adulthood. The third volume of the Data Book will review the transitions students make from school to college and from school to work and will complete the three-volume set.

William H. Gray, III
President and CEO

Acknowledgments

The Frederick D. Patterson Research Institute has benefited from the support of some of the nation's leading corporate and philanthropic institutions and education organizations along with the most talented and committed professionals in producing this databook. To each one we are grateful. The Frederick D. Patterson Research Institute would like to extend its most heartfelt thanks to the following contributors: The Mott Foundation for contributing the initial funding that permitted The College Fund/ UNCF to establish the Frederick D. Patterson Research Institute as a permanent endowment; The Pew Charitable Trusts, The W.K. Kellogg Foundations, and Lilly Endowment, Inc., for providing grants used to design, produce, and disseminate the report; Sun Microsystems for donating a powerful state-of-the-art file server that permitted the Institute to store, process, and analyze large-scale databases and retrieve data and information electronically over the Internet; The IBM Corporation for providing the personal computers for the researchers at the Institute to use in analyzing data and writing the report; and both The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences Incorporated (SPSS) and The Microsoft Corporation for the software products required to write the reports and present the data in tables and graphs. The Institute would also like to thank The Rockefeller Foundation for providing part of the support needed for staff leadership at the Institute; and The University of Michigan for contributing the time and part of the salary of the Executive Director of the Frederick D. Patterson Research Institute along with the expertise of its faculty in the areas of population research and large-scale databases.

The time and proficiency of individuals are what transform valuable fiscal and material resources into valuable products. We are grateful to some of the nation's best talent for their involvement and support of this project, including Michael Fields, Chairman of OpenVision, for his assistance in designing the technology strategy and securing contributions from major corporations; Lester Monts, Vice Provost for Academic and Multicultural Affairs at the University of Michigan for championing the University's personnel and financial contributions to the project; and the staff of the Frederick D. Patterson Research Institute: Laura Perna, Mallery Hobbs, Erica Rhodes, Heather Herbert, Michael Fraser, Karen Warfield, and Monique Roberts for their tireless efforts in the production of this work.

Invaluable consultants to the project include: Mur Muchane from the University of Tennessee, who served as a software specialist and leading technology strategist; Nancy Robertson, who assisted in analyzing and producing sections of the report; and Susan MacKenzie, who provided editorial assistance throughout the project. Others involved in various aspects of the project were: Shep Roey of the Westat Corporation; Paul Ramsey, Eleanor Horne, and Eugene Johnson of the Educational Testing Service; Susan Hill of the National Science Foundation; Reynolds Farley of the University of Michigan; and Tom Satterfiel and Jim Maxey of the American College Testing Company.

The data and information included in this report are among the best and most voluminous collection and reporting of educational statistics in a single document. In the course of obtaining

a license to operate restricted data collected by government agencies, the Institute received the support and assistance of Alan Moorehead and Cynthia Barton of the U.S. Department of Education, and Mary Reynolds and Carolyn Shettle of the National Science Foundation. The data that were not received from these two agencies were either contributed by or purchased from The American College Testing Company, The Defense Data Manpower Center, The College Board, The Educational Testing Service, and The National Assessment Governing Board. To these organizations we are extremely grateful, for the rich data provided on tests and assessments and other important indicators, and for the generous overtures of technical assistance on matters ranging from interpreting data to reviewing draft documents.

The data and information presented in Volume II of *The African American Education Data Book: Preschool Through High School Education* describe the status, performance, and experience of African American preschoolers, elementary and secondary school students, teachers, and principals. From the perspective of African American school children, these analyses show that there are visible racial distinctions in the preparation of preschoolers for school and that much inequality remains in America's public and private elementary and secondary schools. As many of the findings in this volume show, neither opportunities nor ideal learning environments are universally shared at any level from preschool through high school. The inequities facing African Americans at these early stages provide some insights into the roots of their later challenges in higher and adult education that are described in Volume I of this Data Book.

Volume II, the second of three volumes describing the status of education in Black America, represents the most comprehensive description of African Americans in elementary and secondary school education ever compiled. A number of indicators are used to describe African Americans' progress and achievement, including the following:

- participation in preschool programs and readiness for school;
- tested abilities at the point of entering school;
- enrollment in various types of public and private elementary and secondary schools;
- characteristics of the schools that enroll high concentrations of African American students;
- rates of attendance, preparation for class, and participation in extracurricular activities;
- performance of 4th, 8th, and 12th graders on national assessments of reading, history, geography, writing, and mathematics;
- students' perceptions of their school environment, including their fears of harm, the presence of gangs and weapons, and the availability of alcohol and drugs;
- high school seniors' participation in community service;
- education, experience, and working conditions of America's public and private school teachers;
- quality of America's public school teachers;
- education and experience of America's public and private school principals; and
- parents' involvement in their children's schools.

Conclusions

Several conclusions may be drawn from the information presented in Volume II.

- The negative consequences of poverty are evident in many ways. For example, poverty appears to limit the involvement of African American parents in their children's education and reduces the number of African American children able to gain access to private school education.
- African American youngsters participate in preschool programs at rates that are higher than those of their White counterparts, although participation rates generally increase with income.
- Although African American preschoolers exhibit abilities comparable to the abilities of their White counterparts in verbal memory skills, African Americans score far below their peers on tests measuring vocabulary skills. Gaps in achievement persist in later years, as illustrated by the lower test scores of African Americans in the 4th, 8th, and 12th grades in areas such as reading, writing, geography, mathematics, and history.
- African American students remain unevenly distributed throughout the nation's schools. More than one-half of African American public school students (56.2%), teachers (63.7%), and principals (51.0%) are located in the southern region of the United States.
- About one-third (30.2%) of African American public school students attend schools in large central cities. More than one-half of African American public school teachers (55.6%) and public school principals (57.7%) work in urban schools.
- African Americans are also overrepresented among students enrolled in special education (28.7%), vocational (29.8%), and alternative or other public (23.0%) schools relative to their representation among students enrolled in regular public schools (16.1%).
- African American students make up at least 50.0% of enrollments in 9.7% of America's public elementary and secondary schools.
- The share of African American students enrolled in America's public schools has declined from 16.4% of students in kindergarten through grade 5 to 15.3% of students in grades 9 through 12, suggesting that African Americans may leave school at higher rates than their counterparts in other racial and ethnic groups.
- African American students are less comfortable than White students in their school environments, as revealed by their greater fear of harm, and they face greater intrusions into their schools, as revealed by the more common presence of security guards, metal detectors, weapons, and gangs.
- African Americans are underrepresented among America's public and private school teachers and principals, indicating continued barriers for African Americans entering these professions and resulting in the absence of a sufficient number of African American role models for young children.
- Historically Black Colleges and Universities play a vital role in preparing the nation's African American elementary and secondary school teachers since more than one-half of all African American public school teachers received their undergraduate degrees from these institutions.
- Some indicators suggest that African American teachers are less prepared than their

White counterparts, but receive less support than Whites for in-service and professional development activities. African Americans score lower than Whites on tests measuring general knowledge, communications skills, and professional knowledge.

Most of the databases used in this volume were procured from the U.S. Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics. Testing data were obtained from the National Longitudinal Study of Youth as well as from the U. S. Department of Education's National Assessment for Educational Progress. The databases used here are cross-sectional, thereby providing a snapshot of students and schools at one point in time.

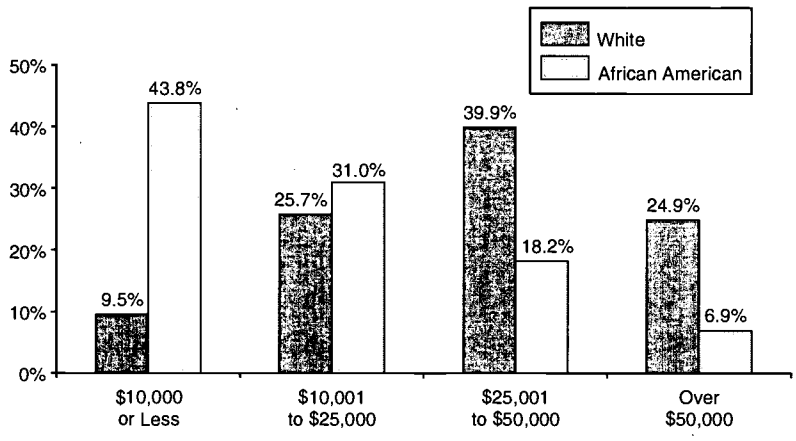
The data and information were designed to present the most comprehensive picture possible of the experiences of African American preschoolers and elementary and secondary students in the nation's schools. This volume complements the data and information presented in Volume I, which focuses upon higher and adult education, and Volume III, which focuses upon the transitions from secondary school to work and from secondary school to postsecondary education.

AFRICAN AMERICAN PRESCHOOLERS

African Americans Face Economic Disadvantages

From low birth weights to other health problems related to income, many African American youngsters start life precariously and continue in the same track. For example, twice the percentage of African American babies as White babies are born weighing less than 5½ pounds (10.4% versus 5.1%). **Figure 1** shows

Figure 1. Household Incomes of 3- and 4-Year-Olds: 1992



Source: National Household Education Survey, 1993.

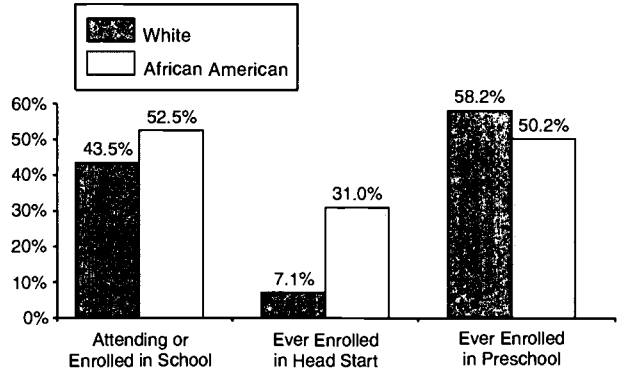
that nearly one-half (43.8%) of African American preschoolers are reared in households with incomes below $10,000, compared with only 9.5% of White preschoolers. The majority of African American children and more than twice as many African American youngsters as White youngsters reside in families that receive public support from programs such as Women, Infants, and Children (54.8% versus 26.2%).

The majority of African American children (66.0% compared with 15.8% of White children) live in mother-led homes, and more of their mothers than the mothers of their White counterparts are employed full-time (37.6% versus 31.1%). Low levels of college completion by their parents suggest that few African American preschoolers live in households where high levels of educational attainment are assumed or taken for granted.

Participation in Preschool Increases With Parental Income

Nonetheless, African Americans appear to recognize the importance of providing a strong preschool foundation. **Figure 2** shows that one-half (52.5%) of African American 3- and 4-year-olds attended or were attending some kind of preschool program, compared with only 43.5% of Whites. Not all African Americans participated equally, however, since attendance rates were lower for African American children at lower rather than higher levels of parental income (54.0% of African American children from families with income below $10,000 attended, compared with 75.5% of African American children from families with income above $50,000).

Figure 2. Percent of 3- and 4-Year-Olds Enrolled in Preschool Programs: 1992

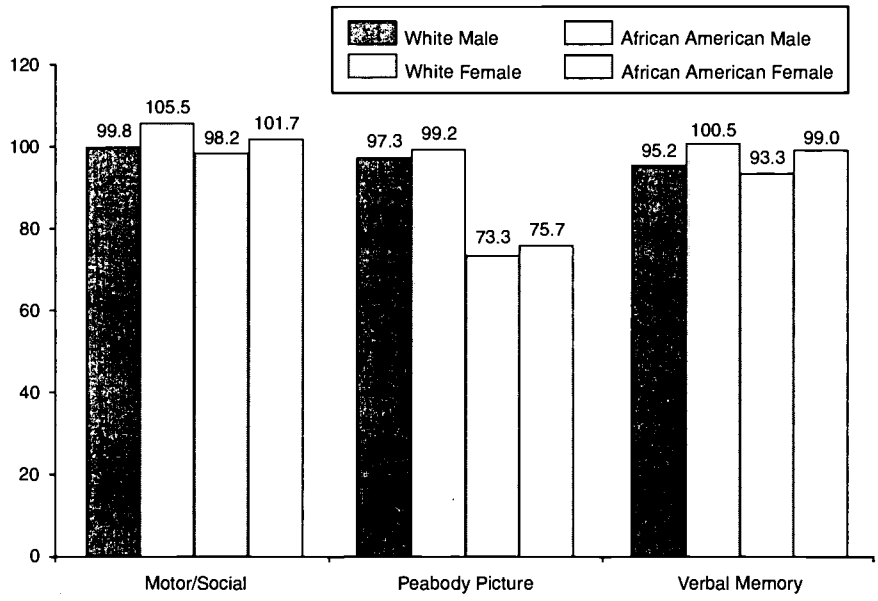


Source: National Household Education Survey, 1993.

Differences in Measures of Readiness for School

On many school readiness measures, African American children seem to differ little from their peers in other racial and ethnic groups. African American 5-year-olds exhibit positive attitudes toward their school experiences. Some differences do emerge, however. For example, a smaller percentage of African American preschoolers than of White preschoolers were judged by their parents to be able to identify all their colors (62.9% versus 83.7%), recognize all the letters of the alphabet (16.5% versus 21.0%), and speak without stuttering (87.4% versus 93.8%). **Figure 3** shows that verbal memory test scores are comparable for African Americans and Whites, but that differences in group averages appear on vocabulary measures. On the Peabody Picture Vocabulary test, African American preschoolers averaged 74.6, compared with 98.2 for Whites. Sex differences are also present at the preschool level, with African American girls scoring somewhat higher than African American boys on the Motor and Social De-

Figure 3. Test Scores of Preschoolers



Source: National Longitudinal Survey of Youth: Children 1986-1992, Females 1979-1992.

velopment (101.7 versus 98.2) and the Verbal Memory (99.0 versus 93.3) tests.

ENROLLMENT IN AMERICA'S PUBLIC AND PRIVATE ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS

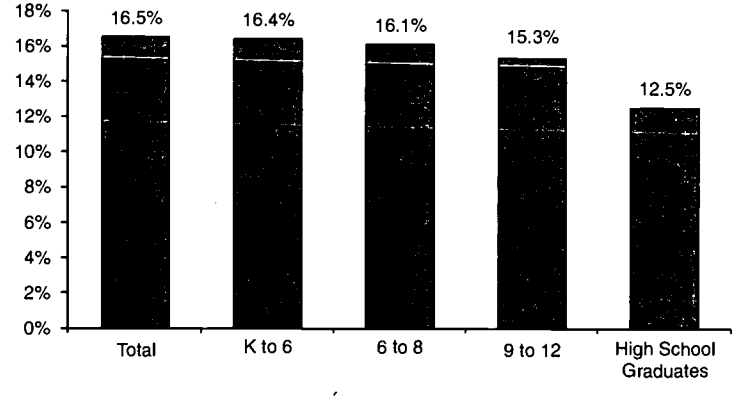
African Americans Underrepresented Among Private School Students

In 1993/94, approximately 43.5 million students were enrolled in America's public elementary and secondary schools and nearly 5 million in America's private elementary and secondary schools. African Americans represented 16.5% of all public school enrollments. African Americans were underrepresented in America's private elementary and secondary schools, where they made up only 9.3% of all enrollments.

Representation of African Americans Lower at Higher Grade Levels

The share of African Americans among students enrolled in America's public schools has declined as grade level has increased, suggesting that African Americans may leave school at higher rates than their counterparts in other racial and ethnic groups. **Figure 4** shows that African Americans represented 16.4% of students in kindergarten through grade 5, 16.1% of students in grades 6 through 8, and 15.3% of students in grades 9 through 12. Moreover, African Americans represented only 12.5% of those who received regular high school diplomas in 1993/94, providing fur-

Figure 4. Representation of African Americans at Selected Grade Levels in America's Public Schools: 1993/94



Source: Common Core of Data, 1993-94.

ther evidence of the challenges African Americans face in their progression through America's public elementary and secondary schools. Similarly, African Americans represented a higher share of private school enrollments at the elementary school level than at the secondary school level (10.5% versus 7.2%).

African American Public School Students Concentrated in Large Central Cities

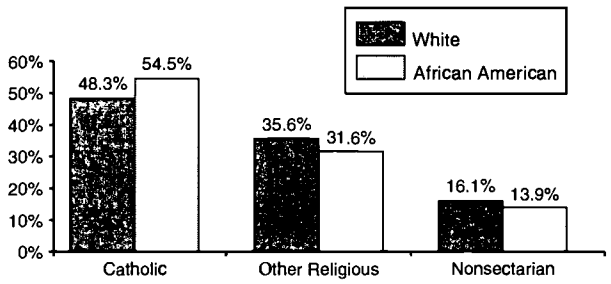
About one-half (56.2%) of African American public school students, but only 33.1% of Whites, attended schools located in the southern United States. African Americans also tended to attend public schools located in large central cities (cities with a population of 400,000 or more) rather than in small towns and rural areas. African Americans represented 37.5% of all students enrolled in public schools located in large central cities, but only 8.8% of those enrolled in rural areas.

Nearly all public elementary and secondary school students were enrolled in regular schools. But relative to their representation among students enrolled at regular public schools (16.1%), African Americans were overrepresented among those attending special education (28.7%), vocational (29.8%), and alternative or other (23.0%) schools.

Characteristics of Private Schools Attended by African Americans

Figure 5 illustrates that the characteristics of schools attended by private school students varied by race group. Compared with their White counterparts, a higher percentage of African Americans attended private schools affiliated with the Catholic church (54.5% ver-

Figure 5. Distribution of African Americans Among Private Elementary and Secondary School Students by School Affiliation: 1993/94



Source: Schools and Staffing Survey, 1993-94.

sus 48.3%), schools with less than 300 students (59.4% versus 46.9%), schools located in urban areas (68.4% versus 40.2%), schools in which more than 60.0% of all students were African American (48.7% versus 0.1%), and schools with tuition under $2,500 (63.1% versus 56.9%).

CHARACTERISTICS OF SCHOOLS ATTENDED BY AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDENTS

Although desegregation may have held out the hope of educational equality, many differences appear to exist among America's schools. It is not surprising that many private (36.0%) and public (20.3%) elementary and secondary schools have virtually no African American students enrolled. African Americans tend to be concentrated in schools that appear to be academically inadequate since schools with a majority of African Americans tend to be vocational-technical, special education, or alternative schools rather than regular schools. Overall, African Americans represented more than one-half of students enrolled in 25.6% of vocational-technical schools, 16.8% of special education schools, and 14.3% of alternative public schools, compared with only 8.6% of regular schools.

Remedial Courses More Common at Schools With a Majority of African Americans

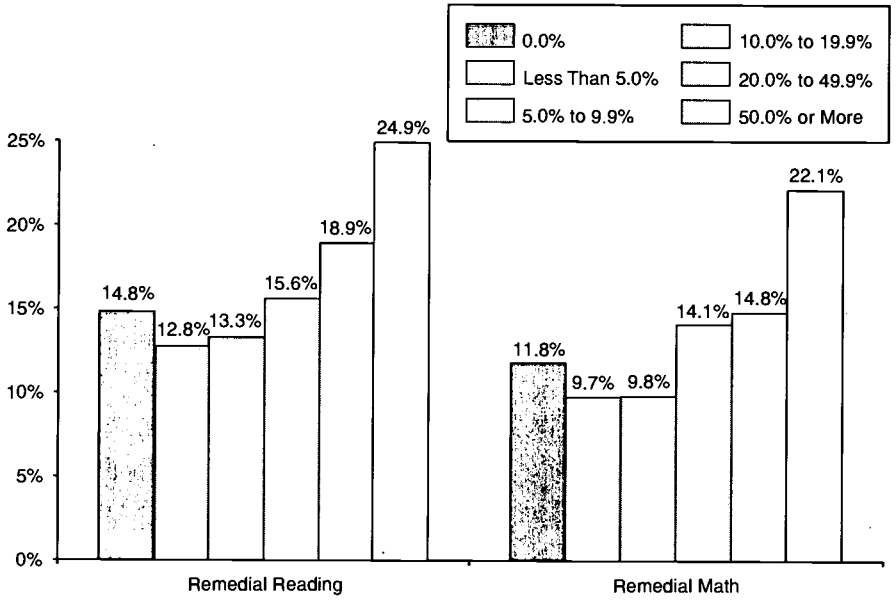
Even in the private sector, schools with a majority of African American students have more admission requirements. For example, 31.5% of private schools with a majority of African American students relied on admissions tests, compared with only 17.5% of schools with no African American students. But, in contrast to schools with few African Americans, the largely African American schools tended to focus upon factors such as special needs and special aptitudes. **Figure 6** shows that remediation programs are abundant in predominantly African American schools, where higher proportions of students participated. At private schools with a majority of African American students, 25.6% participated in remedial reading and 28.1% participated in remedial math. By comparison, at private schools with no African American students, 18.0% of all students participated in remedial reading and 17.9% participated in remedial math.

Overall, Head Start programs were available at only 6.5% of public elementary and secondary schools in 1993/94. Although there appears to be more of these programs at schools with a majority of African American students, they were by no means common or widespread in 1993/94.

Teacher Vacancies Higher at Schools With African American Students

The quality of teachers at schools also appears to vary with the concentration of African Americans in the student body. About 64.7% of schools with no African American students had teacher vacancies, compared with 73.7% of all schools. Moreover, in con-

Figure 6. Percent of Students Participating in Various Programs at Public Schools by Percent of African American Students Enrolled: 1993/94



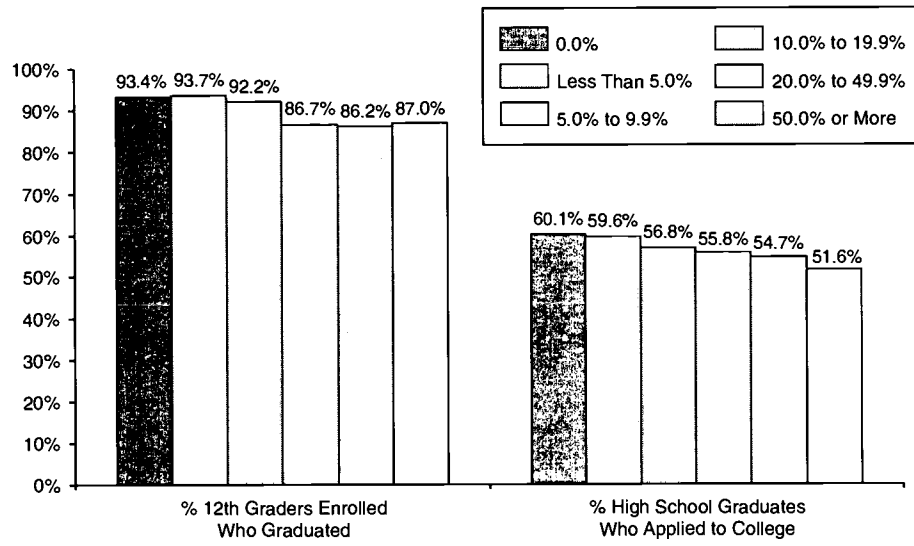
Source: Schools and Staffing Survey, 1993-94.

trast to schools with few African American students, 31.2% of schools with a majority of African American students, but only 5.5% of schools with no African American students, relied upon long- and short-term substitutes to fill vacancies.

High School Graduation and College Enrollment Rates Lower at Schools With a Majority of African Americans

The challenges that face schools dominated by African Americans are further evidenced by their lower graduation rates and lower college enrollment rates. **Figure 7** shows that, among public schools with no African American students, 93.4% of seniors graduated on time, compared with 87.0% of seniors from high schools in which African Americans were in the majority. Likewise, among public schools with no African American students, 60.1% applied to college, compared with 51.6% of students from high schools where African Americans constituted 50.0% or more of the student body. The greater availability of job placement services at predominantly African American schools (38.3% versus 15.7% for schools with no Afri-

Figure 7. Characteristics of High School Seniors at Public Schools by Percent of African American Students Enrolled: 1993/94



Source: Schools and Staffing Survey, 1993-94.

can Americans) suggests one possible explanation for decreased college entry.

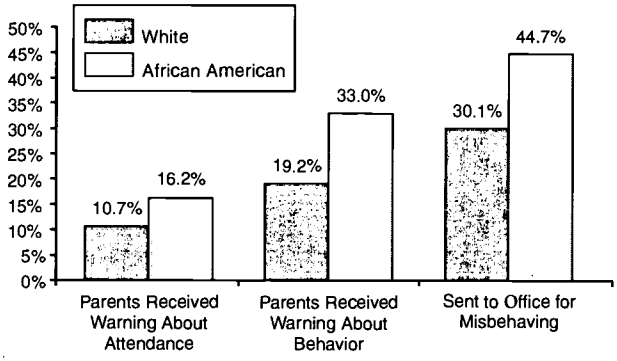
ATTENDANCE AND BEHAVIOR AMONG 1988 8TH GRADERS IN 1988 AND 1992

On some measures, African American students appear to be as ready to learn as their White counterparts. Although preparation for class was generally higher for girls than for boys, class preparation rates did not vary for African Americans and Whites of the same sex. In both 1988 and 1992, similar percentages of African Americans and Whites consistently attended class with their books and their note-taking materials and having completed their homework.

Higher Rates of Unexcused Absences and Tardiness Among African Americans

Figure 8 shows that African Americans appeared to be disciplined for behavioral problems with greater frequency than White students since a higher percentage of African Americans than Whites were sent to the office for misbehaving (44.7% versus 30.1%). Other

Figure 8. Percent of 1988 8th Graders Who Were Warned About Their Behavior in 1988



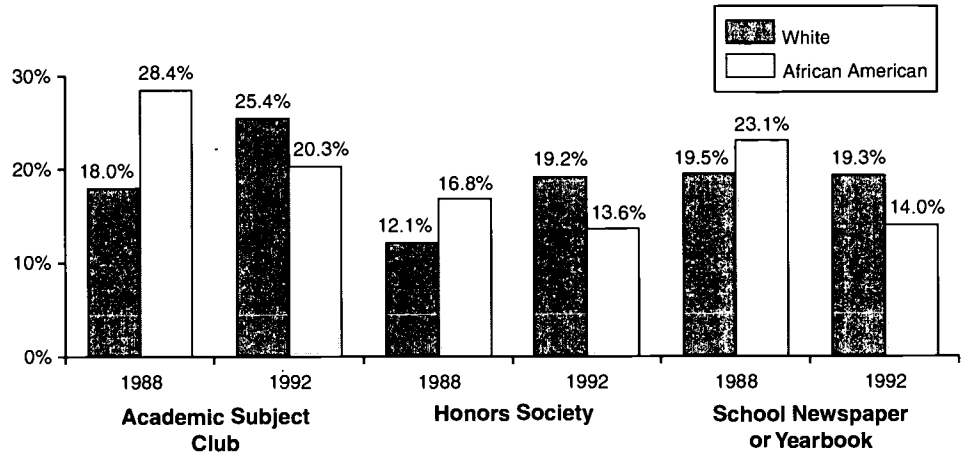
Source: National Educational Longitudinal Study of 1988 Eighth Graders, Base Year (1988).

indicators suggest that African American students are less ready to learn than White students. On average, African Americans had higher rates of unexcused absences and tardiness than White students. For example, in 1991/92, 59.1% of African Americans, but 50.8% of Whites, who were 8th graders in 1988 reported at least one unexcused absence. About 86.7% of African Americans, but 79.1% of Whites, reported being late for school at least once during the first term of the 1991/92 academic year.

Lower Rates of Extracurricular Involvement for African Americans

African American high school seniors also appear to be less involved in school-related activities than their White counterparts. Particularly troublesome is the decline between the 8th and 12th grades in the proportion of African Americans who participated in academic subject clubs, academic honor societies, and the school newspaper and yearbook, as shown in **Figure 9.** For example, in 1988, a higher share of African American 8th graders than of White 8th graders were members of academic subject clubs (28.4% versus 18.0%), but by the time most of these students were high school seniors, participation rates had declined to 20.3% versus 25.4%. Similar changes were apparent for participation in academic honor societies from 1988 (16.8% versus 12.1%) to 1992 (13.6% versus 19.2%). The decrease in involvement in the school newspaper or yearbook was greater for African Americans (23.1% in 1988 to 14.0% in 1992) than for Whites (19.5% in 1988 to 19.3% in 1992).

Figure 9. Participation of 1988 8th Graders in School Activities in 1988 and 1992



Source: National Educational Longitudinal Study of 1988 Eighth Graders, Base Year (1988) and Second Follow-Up (1992).

Moreover, African American students seem to have less exposure to nonschool educational activities and opportunities. As 8th graders, a smaller percentage of African Americans than of Whites (57.9% versus 67.2%) participated in nonschool clubs, such as scouting, religious organizations, 4-H clubs, and other youth groups. On average, African American students spent substantially greater time watching television than their White counterparts in both 1988 and 1992. In 1988, 80.0% of African American 8th graders, compared with 63.3% of White 8th graders, watched more than two hours of television each weekday. In 1992, 69.7% of African Americans, compared with 49.0% of Whites, watched at least two hours of television each weekday.

AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDENT PERFORMANCE ON THE NATIONAL ASSESSMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PROGRESS (NAEP)

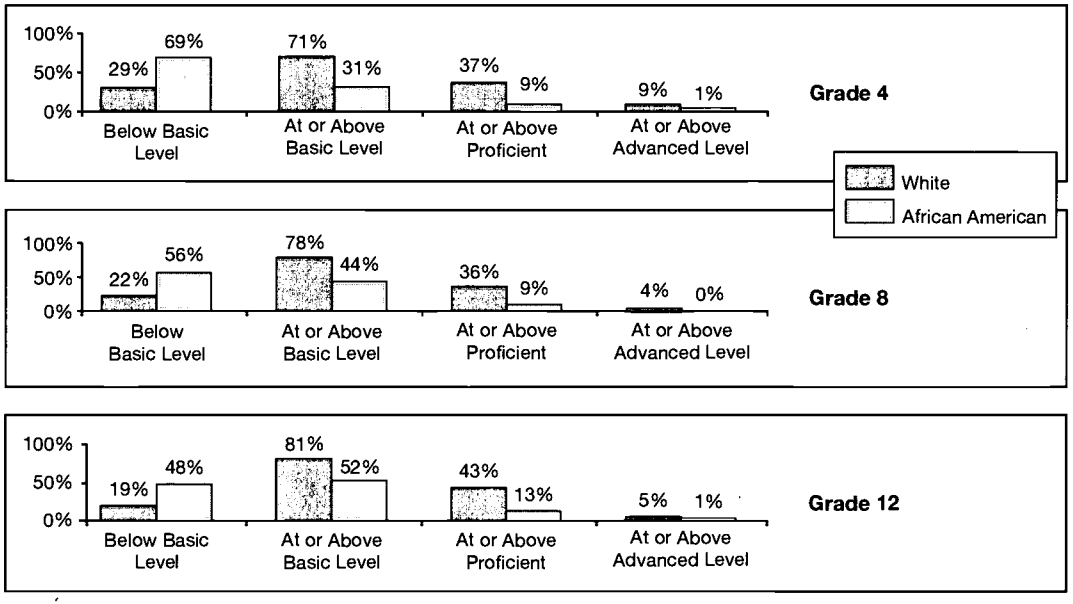
Scores of African Americans on National Assessments Lag Behind Scores of Whites

The NAEP scores provide among the first indications of those subject-related challenges that African American students face throughout their educational experience. The 1992

and 1994 NAEP data show that the majority of African Americans in the 4th, 8th, and 12th grades did not achieve the National Assessment Governing Board's basic level of achievement in reading, history, geography, and mathematics. **Figure 10** shows that, in reading, only 31.0% of African American 4th graders were judged to have attained the basic level, compared with 71.0% of White 4th graders. These differences persisted to the 12th grade, with 52.0% of African Americans and 81.0% of Whites achieving the basic level. The national goal is for all students to achieve the proficient level. In mathematics, 3.0% of African American 12th graders and 19.0% of White 12th graders achieved at or above proficient. In reading, 13.0% of African American 12th graders and 43.0% of their White counterparts achieved at or above proficient.

Because of a different scoring system for writing, the data suggest only that African American students are overrepresented in the bottom performing one-third of schools and

Figure 10. Percent of African Americans Scoring at Various Levels on the National Assessment of Educational Progress Reading Report Card: 1994

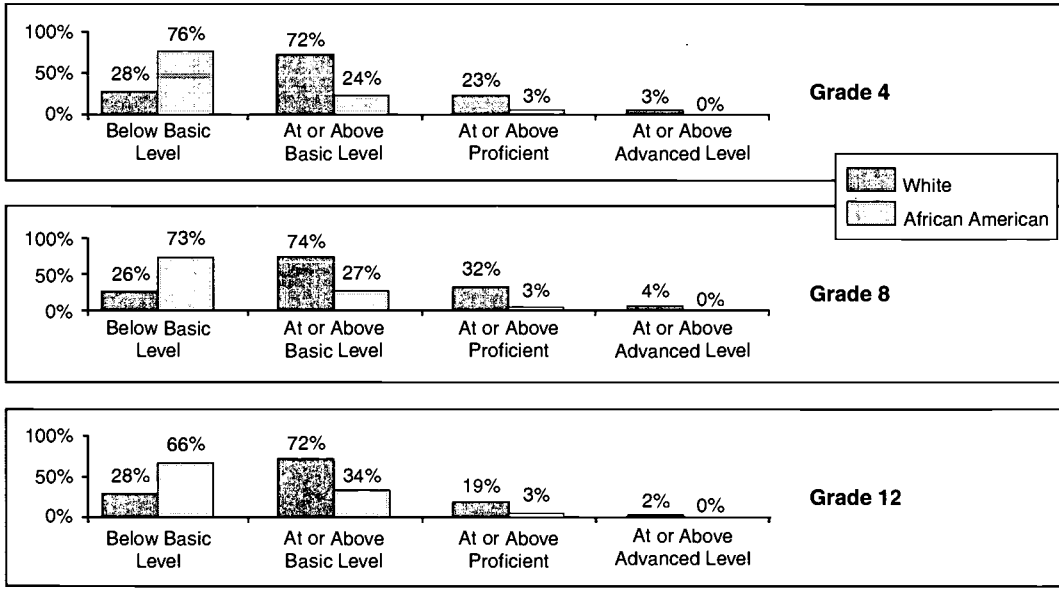


Source: NAEP 1994 Reading Report Card for the Nation and the States, January 1996.

underrepresented in the top-performing schools. In the 4th grade, only 3.0% of the students in the top-performing schools were African American, whereas 88.0% of students in those schools were White. In the 12th grade, only 7.0% of the students in the top-performing schools were African American, whereas 81.0% were White.

In all five subject areas and all three grade levels, the NAEP scores of African American students lagged behind the scores of their White counterparts. Less than one-third of African American 12th graders had achieved a level of basic in mathematics, history, and geography. **Figure 11** shows that in mathematics the percentage of African American 12th graders who achieved the basic level was higher than the percentage of African American 4th graders (34.0% versus 24.0%), but still lower than the percentage of Whites in both grades (72.0% and 72.0%). Although mitigating factors such as school characteristics, socioeconomic status, and study habits were not considered, the data illustrate one of the greatest educational challenges facing African Americans.

Figure 11. Percent of African Americans Scoring at Various Levels on the National Assessment of Education Progress Mathematics Report Card: 1994



Source: NAEP 1994 Mathematics Report Card for the Nation and the States, May 1994.

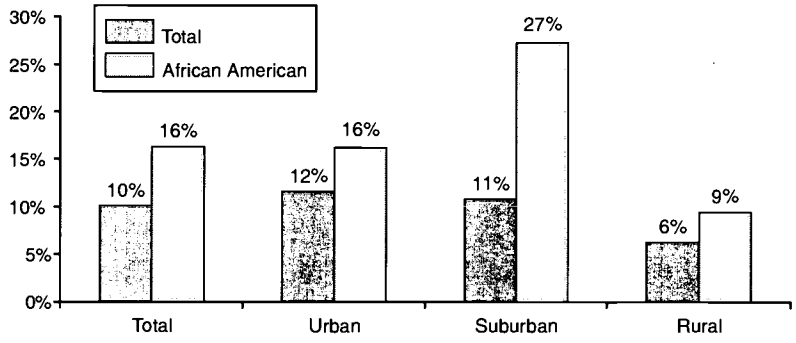
SCHOOL SAFETY AND ALCOHOL AND DRUG USE IN AMERICA'S SCHOOLS

African American Students Feel Less Secure at School and on School Grounds

In terms of their fears and perceived threats, African Americans appear to be less comfortable than Whites in their school environment. A greater percentage of African American students than their White counterparts confront a variety of problems, including: (a) worries about their personal security at and around their schools; (b) greater exposure to weapons in their schools (48.2% versus 40.8%), to fighting gangs (41.5% versus 31.0%), and to drug dealers (20.9% versus 15.6%); and (c) more restricted school environments as evidenced by the greater presence of teachers who were supervising hallways, limits on restroom access, security guards, metal detectors, and locked doors in their schools. More than twice the percentage of African American students as White students reported the presence of security guards in their schools (53.3% versus 23.5%), and more than six times the percentage of African Americans as Whites reported the presence of metal detectors (15.7% versus 2.6%).

African Americans are underrepresented at private schools, schools in which both African American and White students report fewer personal security concerns. School location presents some anomalies since, as **Figure 12** shows, African American students seem to express greater concerns and fears in suburban schools than in urban schools.

Figure 12. Percent of Students in Grades 6-12 Who Were Worried About Harm While Traveling To and From School



Source: National Household Education Survey, 1993 School Safety and Discipline Component.

Some small differences are observed between African American girls and African American boys in their reporting of these concerns. For example, African American boys tend to avoid areas on school grounds more than African American girls. Overall, however, perceptions of threats and fears are similar for African American girls and African American boys, although the perceived fears are higher than those of Whites in most instances.

African American Students Talk With Their Parents

Some consolation can be derived from reports that a higher percentage of African American students than of White students report talking with their parents about their perceptions of threats and dangers at school. Comparable percentages of African American boys (37.5%), African American girls (36.1%), and White girls (36.5%) talk to their parents about alcohol and drugs, higher than the share of White boys (29.4%).

Lower Rates of Alcohol and Drug Use Among African American High School Seniors

A greater share of African American students than White students in grades 6 through 12 reported that obtaining marijuana at school was easy (36.9% versus 27.1%). Nonetheless, a smaller share of African American high school seniors than of their White counterparts reported using marijuana (18.8% versus 28.3%), smoking cigarettes (4.7% versus 23.6%), and consuming alcohol (**see Figure 13**), regardless of region, urbanicity, poverty level of the student body, school type, socioeconomic status, or test score.

PARTICIPATION IN COMMUNITY SERVICE BY 1992 HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS

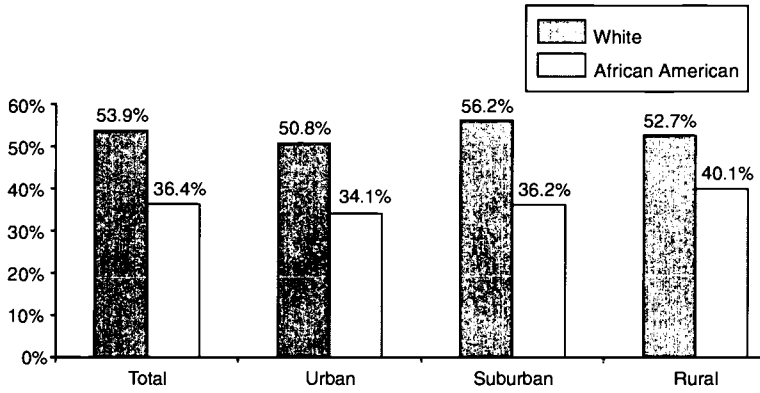
Community Service Participation Rates Lower for African Americans Than for Whites

Overall, about 44% of 1992 seniors participated in community service during their last two years of high school. **Figure 14** shows that girls participated at higher rates than boys (50.0% versus 38.2%, overall). African Americans generally participated at lower rates than their White counterparts (34.3% versus 45.9%). Although community service was voluntary for most of the seniors surveyed, this was the case for a smaller share of African Americans than of Whites (77.3% versus 87.1%).

Test scores appear to be related to the likelihood of community service, with those having lower scores participating at less than half the rate of higher scoring seniors (24.1% versus 57.5%, overall). Among students in the three lowest test quartiles, participation rates were comparable for African Americans and Whites. But among those with the highest test scores, a smaller share of African Americans than of Whites participated (42.7% versus 59.3%).

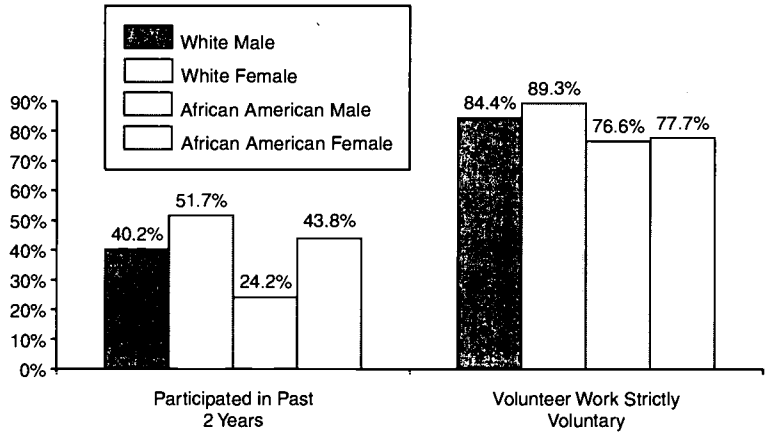
Overall, more than one-half of high school seniors in the highest socioeconomic status participated in community service, compared with only one-third of those in the lowest socioeconomic status (58.8% versus 31.3%). Participation rates were comparable for Afri-

Figure 13. Percent of 1992 High School Seniors
Who Used Alcohol in the Last 30 Days by School Urbanicity



Source: National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988 Eighth Graders, Second Follow-up (1992).

Figure 14. Percent of 1992 High School Seniors
Who Participated in Community Service
During the Past 2 Years



Source: National Educational Longitudinal Study of 1988 Eighth Graders, Second (1992) Follow-Up.

can Americans and Whites with the lowest socioeconomic status (29.5% versus 30.5%). But at higher levels of socioeconomic status, African American high school seniors appear to participate at lower rates than their White counterparts (49.4% versus 58.9% in the highest socioeconomic status quartile).

A greater share of girls than boys engaged in community service among both Whites and African Americans in urban, suburban, and rural high schools. Regardless of school location, a smaller share of African Americans than of Whites took part. Among African Americans, 39.4% of those in urban schools, 29.5% of those in suburban schools, and 31.9% of those in rural schools participated in community service, compared with 54.0% of Whites in urban schools, 45.4% in suburban schools, and 42.1% in rural schools.

Overall, one-half (50.4%) of students attending schools with the lowest levels of poverty (as measured by the share of students who receive free or reduced lunch) participated in community service, compared with about 37.7% of students attending schools with the greatest poverty levels. Rates of participation were comparable for African Americans and Whites attending schools with the least poverty (50.6% versus 49.9%). But at schools in which at least 6% of the students received free or reduced lunch, a smaller share of African Americans than of Whites participated.

About two-thirds (65.2%) of high school seniors attending Catholic high schools participated in community service, compared with less than one-half (42.4%) of seniors at public high schools. At public schools, African Americans' participation in community service lagged behind that of Whites (33.1% versus 44.2%). But participation rates of African Americans and Whites were comparable at Catholic (60.6% versus 65.3%) and other private schools (47.1% versus 59.7%).

CHARACTERISTICS OF PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SCHOOL TEACHERS

At 7.4%, African Americans are underrepresented among America's public school teachers relative to both their representation in the U. S. population (12.5%) and their representation among the nation's public school students (16.4%). African Americans are even more severely underrepresented in America's private schools, where they comprise only 3.1% of all private school teachers. The older average age of African American public school teachers suggests that the current underrepresentation of African Americans will not be corrected soon. Nearly one-half (46.0%) of African American public school teachers are age 50 and older, compared with only 24.9% of all public school teachers.

African American Teachers Concentrated in Urban Schools

The majority of African American public (55.6%) and private (68.1%) school teachers work in schools located in urban areas. Although African American public school teachers are concentrated in the South (63.7%), African American private school teachers are more evenly distributed by geographic region. African American teachers are also concentrated in schools in which African Ameri-

can students make up at least 60% of the student body in both the public (47.1%) and private (56.4%) sectors. In addition, **Figure 15** shows that African Americans tend to teach in public and private schools with higher percentages of minority students and teachers than their White counterparts.

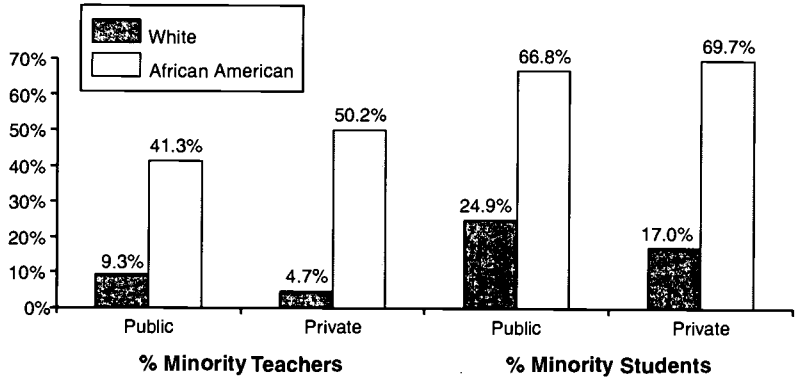
Average Salaries Comparable

Overall, the salaries of African American public and private school teachers appear to be comparable to those of their White counterparts. Some differences emerged for public school teachers age 40 and older, with African Americans receiving lower salaries than Whites. School location also played a role in salaries since African Americans earned lower salaries than Whites in urban, suburban, and rural public schools.

African Americans Concentrated Among Chapter One Teachers

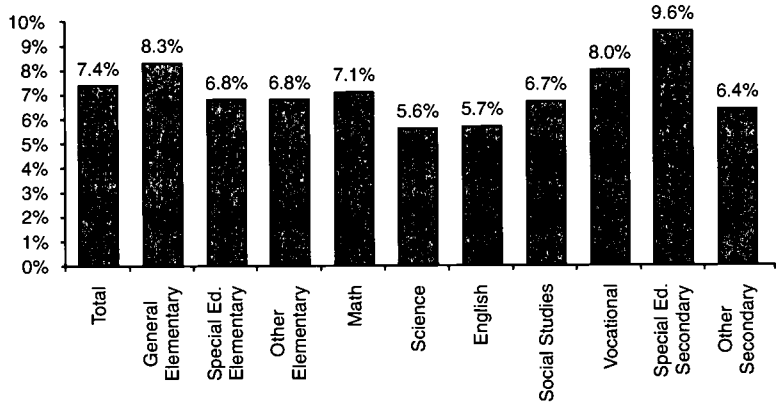
Figure 16 illustrates important differences in the distribution of African American teachers by subject area. For example, African American female teachers are concentrated in general elementary and secondary special education, whereas African American males tend to teach social studies. Moreover, African Americans are more likely than their White counterparts to be Chapter One teachers. It is interesting that African American public school teachers generally participate in several curriculum-related activities at a higher rate than their

Figure 15. Racial Composition of Schools in Which Public and Private School Teachers Teach: 1993/94



Source: Schools and Staffing Survey, 1993-94.

Figure 16. Representation of African Americans Among Public School Teachers of Various Academic Subjects: 1993/94



Source: Schools and Staffing Survey, 1993-94.

White counterparts, such as committees to integrate academic skills into vocational curriculum (22.1% versus 15.3%), education technology programs (54.3% versus 48.8%), student assessment programs (58.9% versus 50.6%), and in-depth study in their subject areas (34.0% versus 29.1%).

Career Paths to Teaching Differ for African Americans and Whites

Educational attainment levels are generally similar for African American and White public school teachers. But among African American elementary school teachers, only 37.3% of African American men have earned at least a master's degree, compared with 52.2% of African American women. A higher share of African American women than of other public school teachers hold advanced professional certificates.

At private schools, African Americans appear to be handicapped by a lack of teaching certificates. Only 43.3% of African American, but 64.9% of White, private school teachers had teaching certificates in their main assignment field. Perhaps compensating for this problem, African American men were taking college courses in their subject areas at a rate higher than that of other private school teachers.

Career paths to teaching appear to be different for African Americans and Whites. For example, only two-thirds of African Americans, but three-fourths of Whites, were college students in the year prior to teaching. About one-fourth (23.9%) of African American male public school teachers and 38.9% of

African American male private school teachers worked in occupations outside the field of education prior to becoming teachers, compared with only 9.3% of all public school teachers and 12.8% of all private school teachers. African American men also had fewer years of teaching experience, on average, in both the public and private sectors.

INDICATORS OF THE QUALITY OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS

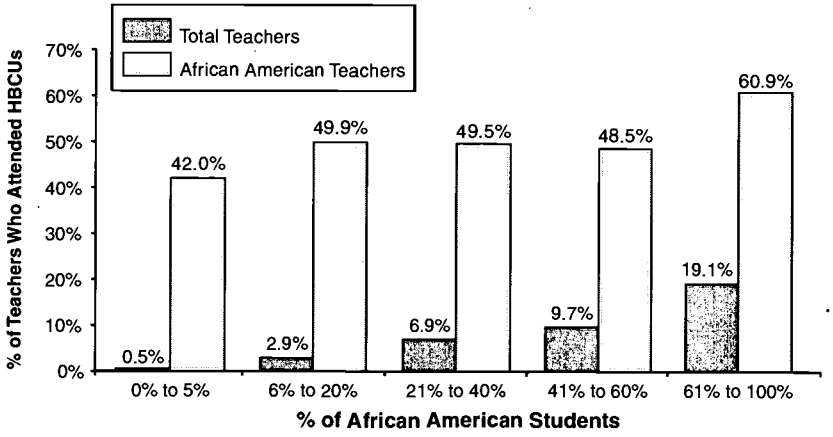
More Than One-Half of African American Teachers Received Bachelor's Degrees From HBCUs

Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) play a vital role in educating America's African American public school teachers. More than one-half (53.4%) of African American public school teachers in 1993/94 received their undergraduate degrees from HBCUs. It is interesting that, as **Figure 17** shows, the percentage of African American public school teachers who received their undergraduate degrees from HBCUs increased with the percentage of African American students enrolled in the school.

African Americans Score Lower Than Whites on Teacher Examinations

On average, the level of education attained by teachers of African American 10th graders was comparable to the level attained

Figure 17. Percent of 1993/94 Public School Teachers Who Attended HBCUs by Percent of African American Students at the Schools in Which They Teach



Source: Schools and Staffing Survey, 1993-94.

by teachers of White 10th graders. For example, 50.9% of African American 10th graders and 50.5% of White 10th graders were taught by teachers whose highest level of education was a master's degree. But **Figure 18** shows that, on average, African American teachers scored lower than White teachers on tests measuring general knowledge (647 versus 661), communications skills (651 versus 663), and professional knowledge (651 versus 663).

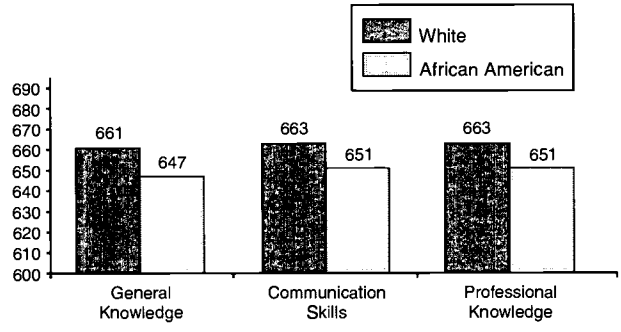
Generally, teachers of African American students have taken fewer undergraduate courses in the subject area in which they teach than teachers of White students. In mathematics, only 61.1% of African American 10th graders had math teachers who had taken at least eight undergraduate math courses, compared with 72.2% of their White counterparts.

African American Students' Teachers Receive Less Support for In-Service Activities

Teachers of African American students may be restricted in their ability to acquire additional preparation, since they tend to receive less support for in-service and professional development activities than teachers of White students. For example, less than one-fourth (22.8%) of teachers of African Americans, but one-third (33.6%) of teachers of Whites, received release time from teaching for in-service activities.

The educational experiences of African American students may be influenced by the types of in-service activities in which their teachers engage. Specifically, the educational interests, behaviors, and experiences of Afri-

Figure 18. Mean Scores of PRAXIS Core Battery Test: 1995/96



Score Scale: 600 to 695, by 1 point increments.

Source: Summary Statistics for PRAXIS Tests Taken Testing Year 1995-96, Educational Testing Service, October 1996.

can American students may be inadequately reflected in school curricula since a smaller share of teachers of African American 10th graders (40.1%) than of teachers of White 10th graders (51.6%) participated on departmental curriculum development committees.

CHARACTERISTICS OF PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SCHOOL PRINCIPALS

African Americans Underrepresented Among America's Principals

African Americans are underrepresented among America's public and private school principals relative to their share of school-age children nationwide (16%). Like their representation among public and private school students, African Americans are better represented among public (10.1%) than private (4.2%) school principals. Nonetheless, the share of African American principals exceeds their representation as teachers in both public schools (10.1% of principals versus 7.4% of teachers) and private schools (4.2% of principals versus 3.1% of teachers).

Overall, women comprised only 34.5% of public school principals (but 72.9% of all teachers). In contrast, African American women comprised a higher share than men of both public (5.8% versus 4.3%) and private (2.9% versus 1.4%) school principals. But among both African Americans and Whites at public and private schools, a higher share of women than men were principals of elementary than secondary schools.

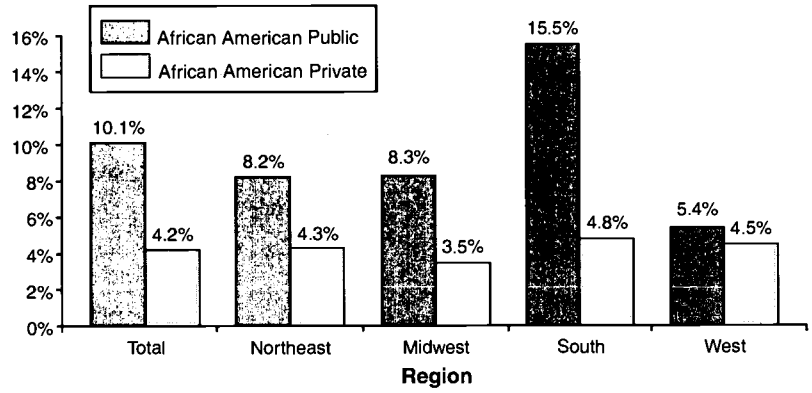
African American principals were concentrated in urban public and private schools. More than one-half of African American public school principals (57.7%) and private school principals (82.8%) worked in urban areas. African American principals were also concentrated in schools with high percentages of minority students and teachers. About 52.8% of African American public school principals and 76.5% of African American private school principals worked in schools in which African Americans represented more than 60% of students.

Mirroring their distribution in the U. S. population, about one-half (51.0%) of African American public school principals worked in the South. **Figure 19** shows that African Americans represented 15.5% of public school principals in the South. In contrast, the distribution of African American private school principals appears to be unrelated to region, with African Americans representing only 4.8% of private school principals in the South.

Career Path to Principal Different for African Americans and Whites

The career path of public and private school principals appears to vary by race and sex. For example, a higher percentage of African Americans than of Whites worked as assistant principals prior to becoming public school principals (81.9% versus 66.1%). A higher share of African American female public school principals than of other public school principals once served as curriculum coordinators (46.1% versus 22.1%). Only one-fifth (22.3%) of African Americans, but one-third (35.8%) of Whites, worked as department heads prior to becoming private school principals.

Figure 19. Representation of African American Public and Private School Principals in Each Census Region: 1993/94



Source: Schools and Staffing Survey, 1993-94.

African American public school principals tended to be older than their White counterparts (50.0 years versus 48.6 years). But, on average, African Americans had fewer years of experience as public school principals than Whites (7.1 years versus 9.0 years). Women had less experience than men among both African Americans (5.8 years versus 8.7 years) and Whites (5.6 years versus 10.5 years).

Figure 20 shows that some programs appear to be working to increase the representation of African Americans among America's principals. Among both public and private school principals, a higher share of African Americans than of Whites received training and development for aspiring principals (public principals, 58.0% versus 35.4%; private principals, 49.3% versus 37.5%) and administrative internships (public principals, 45.1% versus 40.0%; private principals, 33.5% versus 20.8%).

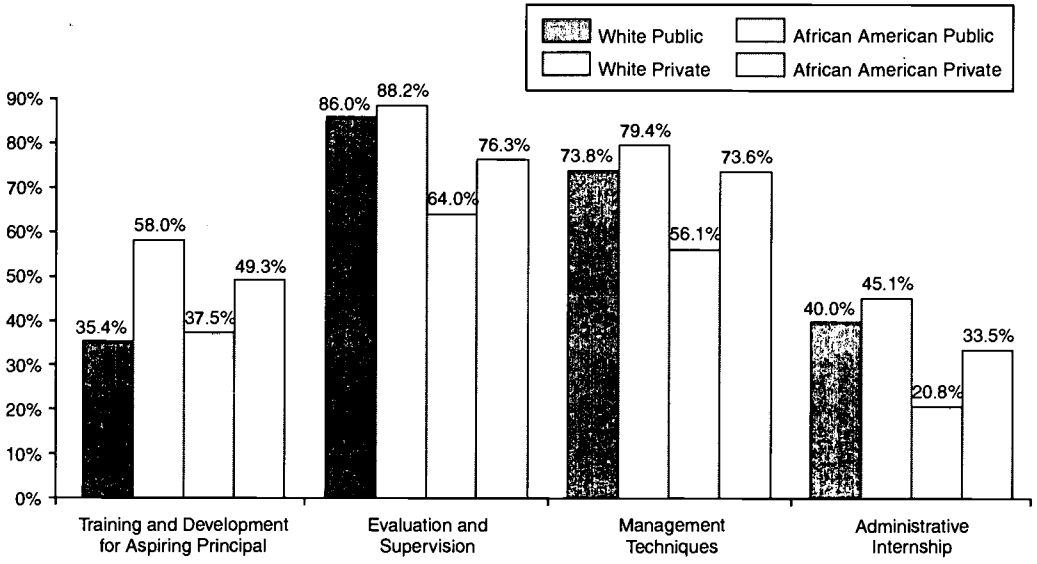
Overall, average salaries were about one-half as high for private school principals as for public school principals ($29,714 versus $54,858). Salaries for African American and White public school principals appeared to be comparable, on average, for principals of the same age who were employed 12 months of the year.

PARENTS' INVOLVEMENT IN THEIR CHILDREN'S SCHOOLS

Higher Percentage of African Americans Than of Whites Attend Public Schools of Their Choice

The data offer little comfort to those who believe that parental involvement can ulti-

Figure 20. Training Received by Public and Private School Principals: 1993/94

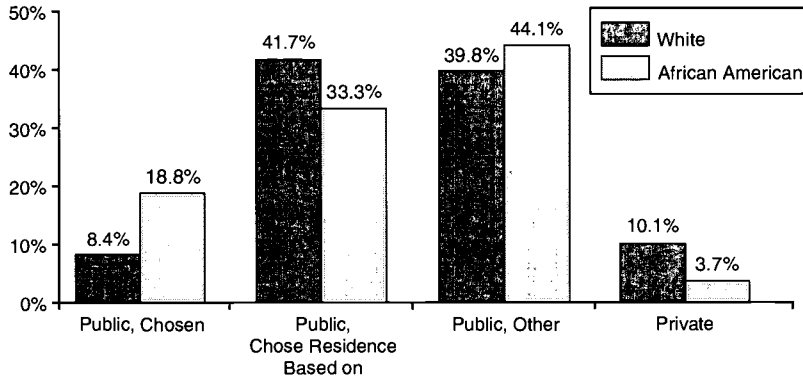


Source: Schools and Staffing Survey, 1993-94.

mately make a difference in both a child's education and the quality of the school district. **Figure 21** shows that a higher percentage of African American students than White students appear to be attending public schools of their choice (18.8% versus 8.4%). But this may be due more to desegregration policies than to any particular selectivity by their parents.

In considering those students who are attending assigned public schools, a smaller share of African Americans than of Whites appears to be choosing residential areas based on the public schools' quality even after controlling for income. Among those with family incomes above $50,000, 36.1% of African Americans attended assigned public schools in chosen residential areas, compared with 48.8% of Whites. Similarly, a smaller percentage of highly educated African American families than of Whites seems to be choosing to reside where quality public schools are available for their children. About 23.6% of African Americans whose fathers had earned advanced degrees attended assigned public schools in chosen residential areas, compared with 48.9% of Whites.

Figure 21. Distribution of Students in Grades 3-12 by Type of School Attended: 1993



Source: National Household Education Survey, 1993 School Safety and Discipline Component.

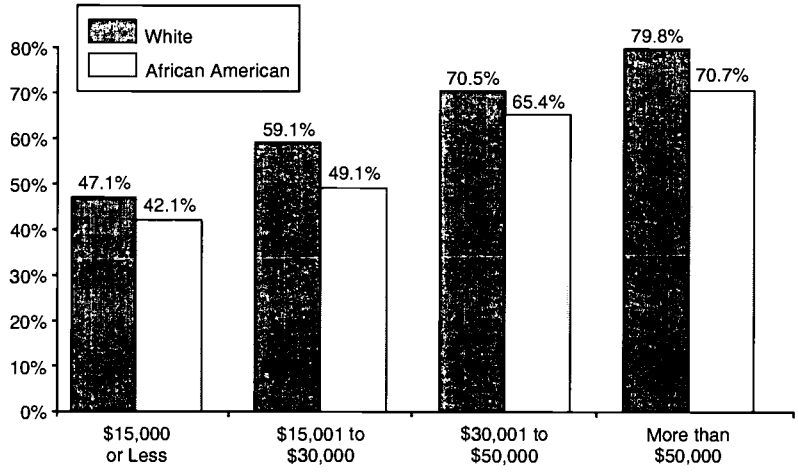
Smaller Share of African Americans Attend Private Schools

As might be expected, attendance at private schools increases with family income and parents' educational attainment for both African Americans and Whites. Nonetheless, a smaller share of African Americans than of Whites attend private schools regardless of their family incomes and mother's highest level of education. African Americans who attend private schools generally live in urban rather than suburban or rural areas. In urban areas, 4.8% of African Americans and 14.0% of Whites attended private schools. By comparison, only 0.7% of African Americans and 6.1% of Whites in suburban areas and virtually no African Americans and 5.8% of Whites in rural areas attended private schools.

Parental Participation in School-Related Activities Lower for African Americans

Only one-half (50.4%) of African Americans, but two-thirds (67.6%) of Whites, participated in activities at school such as attending a school meeting or school event, volunteering at school, or serving on a committee. **Figure 22** suggests that low family incomes limit participation in school activities for both African American and White parents. But the gap between African American and White parents' participation persists even after controlling for mother's employment status, child's grade level, poverty level of the community, and urbanicity. For example, among families with mothers who are not in the labor force, only 39.5% of African Ameri-

Figure 22. Percent of Students in Grades 3-12 Whose Parents Reported They Had Participated in Two or More School Activities by Family Income: 1993



Source: National Household Education Survey, 1993 School Safety and Discipline Component.

can parents, but 65.6% of White parents, participated in school activities.

Communication about school events appears to be least common between African American boys and their parents. Only 63.2% of African American boys talked with their parents about school events, compared with 72.6% of African American girls, 72.2% of White boys, and 82.7% of White girls.

CONCLUSIONS

This compilation of data about the educational status and achievement of African Americans in preschool through high school is intended to be of use to the general population as well as to particular groups of individuals. For all readers, this Data Book provides a single source of data and information describing the preschool, elementary, and secondary education experience of African Americans. At each level, indicators of progress and challenges are presented. It is hoped that this compilation will cause readers to raise questions about the additional types of data that need to be collected at the national, state, local, and institutional levels in order to develop a more complete understanding about the progress achieved by and the continuing challenges facing African Americans in the U.S.

Like Volume I, this volume of the Data Book reveals several gaps in the knowledge base. In some instances, the data are not available from existing national databases to com-

pletely understand the status and condition of African Americans. For example, although educators may be encouraged by African Americans' relatively high rates of participation in Head Start and other types of preschool programs, these analyses are limited by the absence of important contextual data. Missing from this discussion is important evidence about the quality of the experiences of preschoolers, including the curricula, the personnel, and the educational focus of the preschool exposures. In addition, the small number of African American private school principals in the sample limits the conclusions that may be drawn about differences between their experiences and the experiences of their majority counterparts.

The data included in Volume II are also intended to provide preschool, elementary, and secondary school teachers and administrators with the baseline of facts describing the current status of African American students. Educators and administrators can then use these facts to identify areas in their plans for improvements and necessary changes in existing policies and practices.

This Data Book also raises a number of important questions that warrant further attention by educational researchers. Among the questions of greatest importance to researchers at the Frederick D. Patterson Research Institute are the following:

Preschoolers

- What are the effects of participation in prekindergarten programs such as Head Start, Chapter One prekindergarten, and school- or district-sponsored prekindergarten programs on students' readiness for school, achievement, progress, high school completion, and postsecondary activities?
- What strategies are needed to raise the vocabulary test scores of African American preschoolers to the level of their White counterparts?

Elementary and Secondary School Students

- What actions are needed to ensure that the levels of enthusiasm for school that are exhibited by African American preschoolers are maintained through later years rather than dissipating into absenteeism, tardiness, and opting-out of school activities?
- What new policies and practices are needed to increase the representation of African American students in America's private schools?
- What strategies are needed to raise the test scores of African American students on national assessments of reading, writing, history, geography, and mathematics to the proficient level?
- What actions are needed to increase feelings among African American students of personal safety and security at school, on school grounds, and traveling to and from school?
- What policies and practices are needed to reduce the presence of fighting gangs, weapons, and drug dealers in America's elementary and secondary schools?

- What lessons can be learned about the lower use of alcohol, marijuana, and cocaine among African American high school seniors than among their White counterparts?
- What are the effects of participation in community service activities upon African American students' postsecondary activities?

Elementary and Secondary School Teachers and Principals

- What new policies and practices are needed to increase the representation of African Americans, particularly African American men, among America's public and private school teachers and principals?
- What strategies are needed to increase the number of African American teachers who receive their undergraduate degrees from research universities?
- What lessons can be learned from the success of HBCUs in preparing African American elementary and secondary school teachers?
- Why does the share of African American public school teachers who have received their undergraduate degrees from HBCUs increase with the representation of African American students in the schools in which they teach?
- What policies and practices are needed to increase school support for in-service and other professional development activities for African American school teachers and principals?
- What strategies are needed to raise the level of preparation of African American school teachers, as evidenced by scores on tests measuring general knowledge, communications skills, and professional knowledge?

Parents' Involvement in Their Children's Schools

- What policies and practices are needed to reduce the negative effects of poverty upon the participation of parents of African American students in their children's education?
- What strategies are needed to increase the level of communication between African American boys and their parents about school-related activities and events?

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